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The Works Of Alexander Pope Esq.

In Nine Volumes Complete. With His Last Corrections, Additions, And Improvements; As they were delivered to the Editor a little before his Death

Being The Third of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

XXXVIII. From the same. His condition: The state of Ireland: Character of Mrs. Pope: Reflections on Mr. Pope's and Mr. Gay's circumstances.

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ingly please me ; but yet I never lov'd to make a visit, or be seen walking with my betters, because they get all the eyes and civilities from me. I no sooner writ this than I corrected myself, and remember'd Sir Fulk Grevil's Epitaph, " Here lies, &c. who was friend to Sir " Philip Sidney." And therefore I most heartily thank you for your desire that I would record our friendship in verse, which if I can succeed in, I will never desire to write one more line in poetry while I live. You must present my humble service to Mrs. Pope, and let her know I pray for her continuance in the world, for her own reason, that she may live to take care of you.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

From Dr. SWIFT.

Aug. 11, 1729.

I Am very sensible that in a former letter I talked very weakly of my own affairs, and of my imperfect wishes and desires, which however I find with some comfort do now daily decline, very suitable to my state of health for some months past. For my head is never perfectly free from giddiness, and especially towards night. Yet my disorder is
 very

very moderate, and I have been without a fit of deafness this half year; so I am like a horse, which, though off his mettle, can trot on tolerably; and this comparison puts me in mind to add, that I am returned to be a rider, wherein I wish you would imitate me. As to this country, there have been three terrible years dearth of corn, and every place strowed with beggars; but dearths are common in better climates, and our evils here lie much deeper. Imagine a nation the two thirds of whose revenues are spent out of it, and who are not permitted to trade with the other third, and where the pride of women will not suffer them to wear their own manufactures even where they excel what come from abroad: This is the true state of Ireland in a very few words. These evils operate more every day, and the kingdom is absolutely undone, as I have been telling often in print these ten years past.

What I have said requires forgiveness, but I had a mind for once to let you know the state of our affairs, and my reason for being more moved than perhaps becomes a Clergyman, and a piece of a Philosopher: and perhaps the increase of years and disorders may hope for some allowance to complaints, especially when I may call myself a stranger in a strange land. As to poor Mrs. Pope (if she be still alive) I

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heartily

heartily pity you and pity her: her great piety and virtue will infallibly make her happy in a better life, and her great age hath made her fully ripe for heaven and the grave, and her best friends will most wish her eased of her labours, when she hath so many good works to follow them. The loss you will feel by the want of her care and kindness, I know very well; but she has amply done her part, as you have yours. One reason why I would have you in Ireland when you shall be at your own disposal, is that you may be master of two or three years revenues, *provisæ frugis in annos copia*, so as not to be pinch'd in the least when years increase, and perhaps your health impairs: And when this kingdom is utterly at an end, you may support me for the few years I shall happen to live; and who knows but you may pay me exorbitant interest for the spoonful of wine, and scraps of a chicken it will cost me to feed you? I am confident you have too much reason to complain of ingratitude; for I never yet knew any person, one tenth part, so heartily disposed as you are, to do good offices to others, without the least private view.

Was it a Gasconade to please me, that you said your fortune was increased 100*l.* a year since I left you? you should have told me how. Those *subsidia senectuti* are extremely desirable,

desirable, if they could be got with justice, and without avarice; of which vice tho' I cannot charge myself yet, nor feel any approaches towards it, yet no usurer more wishes to be richer (or rather to be furer of his rents.) But I am not half so moderate as you, for I declare I cannot live easily under double to what you are satisfied with.

I hope Mr. Gay will keep his 3000*l.* and live on the interest without decreasing the principal one penny; but I do not like your seldom seeing him. I hope he is grown more disengaged from his intentness on his own affairs, which I ever disliked, and is quite the reverse to you, unless you are a very dextrous disguiser. I desire my humble service to Lord Oxford, Lord Bathurst, and particularly to Mrs. B—, but to no Lady at court. God bless you for being a greater Dupe than I: I love that character too myself, but I want your charity. Adieu.

L E T T E R X X X I X .

Oct. 9, 1729.

IT pleases me that you received my books at last: but you have never once told me if you approve the whole, or disapprove not of some